God's offer to you in Christ Jesus

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HOW TO USE THIS PAMPHLET

This pamphlet is meant to be used with inquirers. It is perhaps too large for free distribution. Those who work with inquirers may find this suggestive of various approaches that can be made to the hearts of people. Perhaps the merit of this pamphlet lies in this that it holds the inquirer to an act of receiving Jesus Christ as the basis of salvation. Our salvation is in Christ. "He that has the Son has life; he that has not the Son has not life."

This pamphlet can be given to seeking souls. It points out clearly the essential steps in a conversion experience. It may be used in the catechism class as a concise statement of what those find who accept Christ. In Sunday school classes it could serve the purpose of clarifying the question of what is involved in a life-transforming experience with Christ. In homes where young people grow up it may be left in the front room for them to pick up at leisure. It may help them to remain conscious of what God's offer to us includes. It might well be used in hospitals with patients. Sick people who are in need of the "balm in Gilead" will find a soul-saving and health restoring experience when they accept the offer of God in Christ.

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GOD'S OFFER TO YOU IN CHRIST JESUS

GOD's WORD says in Romans 8:32: "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, will he not also give us all things with him?" With His Son, God gives us all things. This means that God offers His gifts to those who receive His Son Jesus Christ. What God offers us in His Son is just what the human heart longs for.

1. IN CHRIST God offers us forgiveness of sins and peace with God.

"For God so loved the world that he gave us his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:16) "To him (Jesus) all the prophets bear witness that every one who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." (Acts 10:43). A person who receives Christ is freed, for we read, "Let it be known to you therefore, brethren, that through this man (Jesus) forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you and by him every one that believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses." (Acts 13:38-39) Our standing before God as forgiven people we find through faith in Jesus Christ. "For by grace have you been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God." (Eph. 2:8) Through nineteen centuries countless men and women have trusted these Words of God and

have found them true. They have experienced forgiveness and peace with God. "Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1)

2. IN CHRIST God offers to accept us and to own us as His children.

It says, "But to all who received him, who believe in his name, he gave power to become children of God." (John 1:12) By receiving Christ we become children of God, for we are adopted as sons of God in Christ Jesus according to Ephesians 1:5. "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith." (Gal. 3:26) God offers to receive us as His children when we receive His Son as Lord and Saviour. "See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are." (I John 3:1)

3. IN CHRIST God offers us eternal life as a present possession.

Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say unto you, he who believes has eternal life." (John 6:47) "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life, he who has not the Son has not life." (I John 5:11-12) Whoever receives Jesus Christ has eternal life as a present possession. This is God's offer to you.

4. IN CHRIST God offers us a new disposition of heart.

Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3) The Apostle Peter tells us in II Peter 1:4 that through the precious and exceeding great promises of God we become partakers of the divine nature. He means to say that when we take God by His promises our hearts and lives are changed. When Christ is truly received, our heart's desires and longings and our purpose of life are brought into tune with His will and that makes life new. This gives us a new disposition. Love to Christ then controls life. Christ Himself in our hearts works the change. This God offers to you.

5. IN CHRIST God offers us an Indwelling Divine Presence.

The Apostle Paul writes, "Examine yourselves, to see whether you are holding to your faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that *Jesus Christ is in you?*—unless indeed you fail to meet the test." (II Cor. 13:5) In Col. 1:27 he speaks of the Indwelling Christ as a great mystery which it is indeed. "To whom God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, *which is Christ in you,* the hope of glory." Through the Holy Spirit Jesus Christ dwells in the heart of the believer and takes control of life. And so Paul writes, "It is no longer I that live, but

Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) True believers have the Holy Spirit and their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. In John 14:16-20 Jesus promises that through the Holy Spirit he will come to be in us. Again he says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me." (Rev. 3:20) It is almost unbelievable, but what the Scriptures say is true, that when we believe in Christ He dwells in our hearts. Christ can make our lives useful and beautiful. This God offers to you in Christ.

6. IN CHRIST God offers us victory.

"But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumph. . ." (II Cor. 2:14) The triumph and victory of which the Apostle Paul speaks here does not refer to any lordship or rulership over other people, much less to a sense of personal sufficiency and righteousness, but rather to a life that is above defeat in the spirit. "I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me." A person who receives Christ and truly gives himself to Him will find his life so fully identified with Christ that what happens to him matters only in so far as it glorifies His Lord. This keeps him above personal insults, personal grievances and hurts. Christ somehow gives him the brave heart, the dauntless spirit, and the love

to carry on regardless. This victorious life God offers you in Christ.

7. IN CHRIST God offers you deliverance from fears.

Jesus has taught us that we are in the love and care of our Heavenly Father. He cares for every sparrow. He cares much more for you and me. In Christ we are children of God. Will He not care for His own children? As we rest in this blessed relationship, we are freed from all fears and anxieties. "For he has said, 'I will never fail you nor forsake you.' Hence we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid, what can man do to me?'" (Heb. 13:5-6) Superstitions such as the saying that a black cat walking across your path will bring bad luck, or the saying that when a woodpecker plays tatoo on the gutter of the house it means that death is coming to the house, will then be cast off as so much rubbish. As long as we are still anxious over such things, our trust in Christ is weak and we are not fully saved. Complete relaxation in His love and care frees us from such bondages and fears. Jesus says, "Come unto me and I will give you rest . . . and ye shall find rest for your souls." (Matt. 11:28-29) "If therefore the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." (John 8:36)

8. IN CHRIST God offers you wisdom.

"He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom . . ." (I Cor. 1:30)

Paul makes the statement that in Christ are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (Col. 2:3) The wisdom of which Paul speaks refers not to factual information or mere knowledge, but rather to an appreciation of what are true values, to an understanding of what is right and in the will of Christ, and to a grasp of spiritual realities. The wisdom of Christ is beautifully characterized by the Apostle James, "But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, without uncertainty or insincerity." (James 3:17) When Christ possesses the heart, such wisdom may be ours. This is God's offer to you in Christ.

9. IN CHRIST God offers you a place of importance in life.

The most hopeful and promising reality on earth is the Kingdom of God, that is, the Rule of Christ in the lives of people. This, Jesus says, we shall seek above all things. Wherever a person may find himself in an earnest endeavor to realize the Will of Christ, there he is making a very vital and real contribution. The will of Christ is important everywhere. All of life is to be brought under His Will. Wherever we contribute towards this goal we are filling an important place in life. There our life takes on significance and importance. To give ourselves to this purpose means that we live our lives in partnership with Christ. God offers you the opportun-

ity to fill an important place in life if you will strive to carry out His Will.

10. IN CHRIST God offers you a way of life.

A person who gives himself to follow and obey Christ will never have the uneasy feeling that he may be living his life wrong or uselessly. Instead, he will always have the conviction that he is right in so far as he truly obeys Christ and interprets His Will to mankind. Jesus says, "I am the Way." In the perfect life of Jesus we see the perfect example of a perfect human life. A person who lets Christ dwell in his heart and rule there supreme will find that Christ transforms life into His own likeness. "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." (II Cor. 3:18) In Christ we find our highest goal for life. He gives our life true direction. This confidence stabilizes and fortifies us in trials. God offers you this in Christ Jesus.

11. IN CHRIST God offers you a way of dealing with evil-doers.

"But I say to you that hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you." (Luke 6:27) Christ loved His enemies with self-sacrificing concern, and prayed for them

when they nailed Him to the cross. "But if when you do right and suffer for it you take it patiently, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps." (I Peter 2:20-21) "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21.) This is God's way of helping the erring ones to see God's standards of life and helping them to a saving knowledge of Christ. This method costs dearly. It cost the Lord Jesus His life. It may cost us our life. Yet it is God's method of dealing with evildoers. This way God offers you to follow with Christ.

12. IN CHRIST God offers you a cross.

Jesus said to His disciples, 'If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matt. 16:24) The cross of which Jesus speaks refers to the suffering, the shame, the persecution, and death that may be involved in following Him faithfully. Such a cross God offers you in Christ.

13. IN CHRIST God offers you a blessed fellowship with His children in the church.

"The church is a fellowship of forgiven and forgiving persons." Church people have much in common. They have in common a great experience with Christ and God. They have one common task—to do the will of Christ. This brings them into a very close friendship and

fellowship. The richest and most rewarding social life can be found only in such fellowship with Christ and God's people. Christian company is the finest you can keep. God offers it to you in Christ.

14. IN CHRIST God offers you an eternity in His Presence in heaven.

Jesus said this to His followers, "And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. (John 14:3) Jesus prayed these words in His High-priestly prayer, "Father, I desire that they also, whom thou has given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24) The anticipation of spending eternity with Christ is beyond words wonderful. What mercy! What love! This God offers you in Christ Jesus.

HOW TO ACCEPT THE OFFER OF GOD IN CHRIST

God's offer is free and for all. To accept it requires a definite act of the will. Fundamentally, it is a matter of receiving Christ and submitting to Him. The steps are simple but very profound.

1. REPENT from your sins and turn from what you know is wrong.

Acknowledge to God that you are a sinner

and lost without a Saviour. If the Spirit of God gives you to feel that you ought to make confession of sins, or that you ought to make restitution for some wrong committed, by all means obey.

2. RECEIVE JESUS CHRIST as your Saviour and Lord.

Give yourself to Him by a simple word of promise. Receive Jesus as your personal Saviour by a simple prayer that from henceforth you belong to Him. By an act of the will make this simple transaction with the Lord. When you have done this, count yourself as His; because you now have the right to become a child of God. "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the power to become children of God." (John 1:12) Just as a bride counts herself the wife of her lover when they have given each other their promises of love, so call yourself a child of God because you have accepted and received Christ and believe in Him. "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith." (Gal. 3:26) Thank God for this.

3. TRUST YOURSELF entirely to Christ.

Trust the promise that through His Blood which was shed on the cross you have remission of sins as a present possession. (Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7; Heb. 9:14-15) Hold yourself to the clear promises of God's Word. Jesus says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life." (John 6:47)

4. GIVE YOURSELF to Christ for obedience.

Promise Christ that you will obey Him as He will reveal His will to you. The call of Jesus is, "Follow Me." Obedience to Christ is very important. "By this we may be sure that we are in him: he who says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked." (I John 2:5-6) ". . . having been made perfect, he (Jesus) became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him." (Heb. 5:9)

The offer of God stands for you to accept. Have you accepted it? If so, you will know how wonderful God's gifts in Christ are. If you have not accepted it as yet, will you now take this simple step and accept Christ and in Him find all the gifts of God? "Today, when you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." (Heb. 4:7)

The Bible says that in Christ's Name we are to say to you, "Be reconciled to God." So we extend Christ's invitation to you. Jesus says, "Him who comes to me I will not cast out." (John 6:37) Let nothing discourage you. Do not hesitate. Do not delay. Accept Christ, and then confess Him as your Saviour through baptism. Then unite with the church and together with other children of God seek the Kingdom of God. You are then a responsible disciple of Christ. You must witness for Christ and strive to help others to receive and obey Him. To do this is not a burden and sacrifice, but rather a privilege in which your heart will find joy and abiding peace.